

BEAT ANXIETY



PUT YOUR MIND



It's normal to feel anxious when facing threatening or dangerous situations. Such reactions gear you up for action and can help you cope. Sitting an exam, being pulled over for speeding, relationship problems, serious illness, accidents or the death of someone close can make you feel anxious. These feelings tend to pass when the situation is over.

Feeling anxious?

Because anxiety in everyday life is so common, it's important to understand the difference between feeling normal anxiety and the potential signs of an anxiety problem.

If your level of anxiety becomes so severe that it significantly interferes with your ability to cope with daily life, you may have a mental health problem. For example, it may interfere with your ability to do things you want to do, such as shopping, talking in a meeting, driving or going out socially.

You're not alone

One in 20 Australians experience anxiety at any one time. Anxiety is closely related to other mental health problems, particularly depression and misuse of alcohol and other substances.

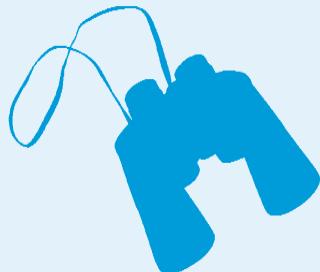
Anxiety and the veteran community

Anxiety affects many veterans and their family members just as it does the general community. The additional stress of active service, multiple deployments and exposure to trauma can affect some more than others.

What are the signs?

People with anxiety problems may experience:

- Breathlessness
- Racing heart
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Feelings of losing control
- Feelings of impending doom
- Excessive fear
- Excessive worry
- Irritability
- Racing thoughts
- Avoidance



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Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

RECOGNISE > ACT > MAINTAIN

The main types of Anxiety Disorders

- **Generalised Anxiety Disorder**

- when people worry excessively and unrealistically about everyday things, such as health, family, friends, money, or career.

- **Panic Disorder**

- when people have extreme panic attacks in situations where most people would not be afraid; these attacks often seem to come "out of the blue".

- **Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

- when people repeatedly re-live a traumatic event, such as war, torture, car accident or assault. They avoid reminders of the trauma. The 're-living' of the traumatic event occurs through intrusive, distressing memories or nightmares. Only a minority of people who experience trauma develop ASD or PTSD.

- **Social Phobia**

- when people have strong and persistent fears of social or performance situations, such as public speaking, talking in a group or at a meeting.

- **Specific Phobias**

- when people are intensely fearful of particular objects or situations and this fear interferes with their daily life. Examples include fear of heights, water, closed spaces, and spiders

- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

- people have constant unwanted thoughts that often result in the performance of elaborate rituals (like excessive cleaning or checking) in an attempt to control the persistent thoughts.

Getting help

Anxiety can be effectively treated. Treatment will vary depending on the person and their situation. Doctors or mental health professionals will use a variety of ways to help people manage or recover from their anxiety problems, including:

- Education to help better understand the causes, effects and treatments available
- Encouraging people to choose a healthy diet, regular exercise, stop smoking and to cut back on caffeine and alcohol
- Psychological treatments which aim to change negative patterns of thinking and behaviour that contribute to anxiety
- Teaching anxiety reduction techniques, such as relaxation and breathing control
- Medication to reduce the symptoms of anxiety and restore normal sleeping patterns

Where to go for more information or help

- Talk to your doctor or health professional
- Call VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service about counselling and their group programs on **1800 011 046**
- For more information call DVA on **133 254**
- Visit www.dva.gov.au

More information is also available at:

www.adavic.org.au

www.beyondblue.org.au

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

www.crufad.com